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# GOYA-RA-RU MARTIAL ARTS

HANDOUT J4

## GUIDE TO BASIC LEG TECHNIQUES

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## Introduction

The role of leg techniques in Karate (and many other Martial Arts) is a prominent one and it is one of Karate's distinguishing features. They are mainly used for striking (e.g. kicking), but can also be used for blocking and sweeping. The legs are thicker, stronger and more powerful than the arms but, at the same time, are more difficult to learn how to use effectively. Whenever one leg is raised from the ground, the other must support the whole body weight and a clumsy kick can result in loss of balance and vulnerability. On the other hand, a well-practiced kick can take an opponent by surprise and be used to devastating effect.



Although high kicks are good for exercise and look impressive, they have a very limited role in real self-defence situations. In real fights, it is preferable to keep kicks low as they are harder to block, have less distance to travel and the chance of the kicking leg being grabbed by an opponent is minimised. Target areas include the knees, groin and lower abdomen.

## 1. Classical Front Kick



**START:** From Front Posture.



**STAGE 1:** Back leg comes to the front with the knee facing forward (at kicking level) and the foot parallel to the floor.



**STAGE 2:** The lower leg is thrust straight forward, keeping the knee at the same height. The hip is also thrust forward to add power and momentum to the kick.



**STRIKING TOOL:** Ball of the foot



**STAGE 3:** The lower leg returns to the guard position, knee facing forward and foot parallel to the floor.



**STAGE 4:** The leg returns in a controlled manner to its original position in Front Stance.

## 2. Freestyle Round Kick



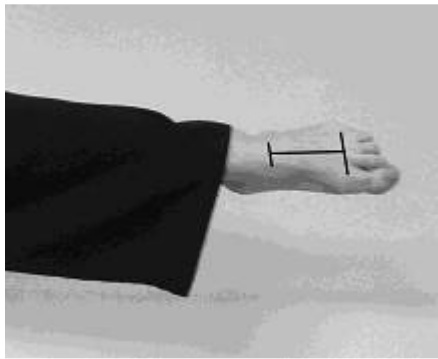
**START:** From Freestyle Fighting Stance.



**STAGE 1:** The front leg is raised with the knee facing forwards and the lower leg to the side



**STAGE 2:** The leg extends horizontally, Keeping the toes pointing forwards. The supporting foot pivots outwards to help with balance and increase reach.



**STRIKING TOOL:** *Instep*  
(suitable for very *light contact only*)



**STAGE 3:** The lower leg returns to the guard position, knee facing forward and foot to the side.



**STAGE 4:** The leg returns in a controlled manner to the front in Freestyle Fighting Stance.

### **3. Forward Knee**



**START:** From Front Stance (Forward Knee can also be done from Freestyle Fighting Stance).



**STAGE 1:** The arms reach forward as if to grab the back of an opponent's head, their hair, or their clothes.



**STAGE 2:** The knee of the back leg is thrust up and forwards as the opponent is pulled onto the knee. Extra power is gained by pushing the hip into the strike.



**STAGE 3:** The leg returns in a controlled manner to its original position in Front Stance.